

NOTE ON THE EGG OF THE REGENT-BIRD,

SERICULUS MELINUS, Lath.

BY DR. E. PIERSON RAMSAY, F.R.S.E.

(Plate XIX., fig. 4.)

Recently, having had several communications from numbers of this and other Scientific Societies in Australia and Great Britain asking for information and a description of an authentic egg of this bird, I venture to offer to the Society a carefully made description and coloured figure of an egg taken from the oviduct of the bird itself, from which it will be seen that most of—I may say nearly all, the so-called Regent-Birds' Eggs in the hands of collectors both in this and the neighbouring colonies are not authentic.

SERICULUS MELINUS, Lath.

Egg.—The ground-colour is of a delicate white with a faint shade of French grey; towards the thicker end is a zone of irregularly shaped spots, some being confluent; these are of a light lilac or bluish-grey and appear beneath the surface of the shell, over which, and on the remaining surface of the egg, are irregular angular lines and linear markings and letters of sienna and brown, forming loops, crosses, and arabic-like marks and figures, some resembling the figures 4, 6, 7, 8, 3, &c., &c., and in one place at the thinner end an irregularly formed capital M. Very few of the lines quite encircle the egg, but many cross and recross each other over the surface towards the thicker end; the thin end has a few similar shorter detached marks. Length 1.35 inches by 0.9 inch.